

**Committee: Barrow Local Committee**

**Date of meeting: 18 November 2020**

**Title of Report: Cumbria Highways Asset Management Strategy (2020-2025)**

**Report by: Angela Jones, Executive Director - Economy & Infrastructure**

**Cabinet Member: Keith Little, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport**

### **What is the Report About? (Executive Summary)**

1. This report provides an update on the Cumbria Highways Asset Management Strategy which was approved by Cabinet in July 2020. It has been developed to improve the management of the Council's highways assets and allows for the longer term planning taking into consideration customer needs, local priorities and asset condition whilst making the best use of the available resources. The Highways Asset Management Strategy sets out how the Council will deliver a Highways Service over the next five years and will drive decisions about investment in the highway network and the direction for future models of service delivery.

### **Background to the Proposals**

2. It is recognised that good highways infrastructure and a well-managed network are essential in helping the council deliver its priorities and secure better outcomes for Cumbria. The Council is facing significant challenges to maintain the highway network in its current condition and at the current levels of government funding the highway network will continue to deteriorate. From 2016/17 a new Incentive Fund has formed a top slice of the highway maintenance block allocation and to maximise the funding available from the DfT the Council will need to continue to demonstrate it is following good asset management practice, efficiency measures and continuous improvement across all aspects of the Highway Service. The updating of the Highways Asset Management Strategy sets out how the council will respond to these drivers.
3. The Highways Asset Management Strategy identifies the vision for the Highway Service to be:  
  
***A customer focused resilient and cost effective service that delivers a safe, well managed asset.***
4. The strategy is aligned to the Council Plan and our new ways of working:
  - **Customer** – Improving customer access to information, reporting performance against agreed standards and make things easier for all our users;

- **Working Together** – Work with Local Committees, Parish/Town Councils, community groups and partners to deliver outcomes for benefit of our communities;
  - **Efficiency** – Use of innovation to be more efficient and reduce impact of Climate Change/Carbonisation (ie Recycled road materials/EV Charge points);
  - **Prevention** – Adopt a preventative approach to address road condition;
  - **Digital** – Investing in Digital solutions such as safety inspections; condition surveys, flood alert system and gully asset data collection
5. The Council submitted a self-assessment questionnaire to the DfT in March 2020, to determine the level of Incentive Fund it receives for 2020/21. There are 3 potential “Bands” and the Council’s self-assessment currently places the Council as being a “Band” 3 authority. The Highway Service aims to review its systems and procedures and deliver an asset management approach with the ambition of remaining a “Band” 3 authority.
6. The Council also needs to demonstrate it is adopting the new codes of practice (‘Well-managed Highway Infrastructure’) to ensure the Council is managing the highway asset in the most effective and efficient way, and is embedding an asset management approach to deliver its Highway Service. Through the new code of practice there is a shift to a risk based approach rather than national service standard guidance. This has required new service standards to be developed that are directly relevant to Cumbria, which embrace the funding available and take account of how the service is delivered.
7. Engagement with Members through the Highways Improvement Board and through Local Committees will continue throughout the implementation of the Strategy, particularly seeking their input in reviewing service standards and priorities which are contained within the Highways Asset Management Delivery Plan which was developed alongside the Highways Asset Management Strategy.

## **Appendices and Background Documents**

Appendix 1 – Cumbria Highways Asset Management Strategy (2020-2025).

Appendix 2 – Cumbria Highways Delivery Plan (2020-2025)

## **Report Author**

Andy Brown, Senior Manager, Highways Assets and Strategy,  
[andy.brown@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:andy.brown@cumbria.gov.uk)